

Health

“Somehow, I didn’t think menopause was going to hit me so hard.”

Mia Emery

says life is normal again after a visit with her Ob-Gyn PAGE 6



IT'S ONLY NATURAL

6 tips for managing diabetes without medication PAGE 4



Complete Care for Skin Cancer

People seeking treatment for skin cancer can get the help they need at the Skin Cancer Center in Baylor Charles A. Sammons Cancer Center at Baylor Scott & White Medical Center – Irving.

“It’s a comprehensive center with dermatologists, plastic surgeons, surgical oncologists, medical oncologists and radiation oncologists on the medical staff, plus access to research and clinical trials,” says Ed Clifford, MD, medical director for the Skin Cancer Center.

The specialists on the medical staff there are trained to treat melanoma, squamous cell carcinoma, basal cell carcinoma, cutaneous sarcomas, Merkel cell carcinoma, dermatofibrosarcoma protuberans and cutaneous T-cell lymphoma.

Treatment plans are tailored to the individual, based on medical history, type and stage of malignant skin

MAKE AN APPOINTMENT TODAY

To see a skin cancer specialist on the medical staff at Baylor Scott & White – Irving, call **972.579.5285**.

condition, and personal preferences, and can include:

- ▶ Skin cancer screening
- ▶ Immunotherapy
- ▶ Targeted therapy
- ▶ Radiation therapy
- ▶ Specialized surgeries, including sentinel lymph node biopsy
- ▶ Plastic surgery
- ▶ Clinical trials

A nurse navigator partners with patients to help them understand their treatment options, access the services they need and schedule appointments.

Heading Off Heatstroke

If you’re exposed to high temperatures, especially while exercising, you run the risk of heatstroke. This serious medical condition occurs when your body temperature reaches 104 degrees and can cause organ damage, brain damage and death.

According to the American Academy of Family Physicians, you should seek medical help right away for:

- ▶ Skin that feels hot and dry but not sweaty
- ▶ Confusion or loss of consciousness
- ▶ Frequent vomiting
- ▶ Shortness of breath or trouble breathing

If you notice these symptoms in someone, call for help and move the person to a cooler location. Wet the skin with water and apply ice packs to the armpits, groin, neck and back to help the person cool down.

To avoid heatstroke, stay indoors and use air conditioning when the heat index is 90 degrees or higher. Exercise indoors, or outdoors in the early morning or evening when it’s cooler.

MORE

Talk to a Health Professional

Your doctor can advise you about heat illnesses and other summertime health hazards. For a referral to a primary care physician on the medical staff at Baylor Scott & White – Irving, visit BaylorHealth.com/Irving or call **1.800.4BAYLOR**.

Baylor Scott & White Medical Center – Irving, 1901 N. MacArthur Blvd., Irving, TX 75061 • 972.579.8100; Baylor Health Center at Irving-Coppell, 400 W. Interstate 635 at MacArthur Blvd., Irving, TX 75063 • 972.785.5500; President: Cindy Schamp; West Region Director of Marketing: Dee Dee Ogrin; Manager of Marketing/PR: Leanne Pettit; Physician Liaison: Laura Dillon; Community Outreach Manager: Rachel Nobles; Main Switchboard: 972.579.8100; Patient Information: 972.579.4358; Physician Referral: 1.800.4BAYLOR (1.800.422.9567); Irving Cancer Center: 972.579.4300; Irving Women’s Pavilion of Health: 972.579.8240; Irving Imaging Centers (Mammography): 2001 N. MacArthur Blvd., Suite 250 • 972.254.1616; 440 W. Interstate Hwy. 635, Suite 120A • 972.785.5650; 2740 N. State Hwy. 360, Suite 200 • 972.579.4480; 24-Hour Emergency Department: 972.579.8110; Human Resources Job Line: 972.579.8750.

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Safe Summer Fun for Families



As you venture outside for some well-deserved quality time, be sure you're doing it safely. Here are family-friendly tips to keep in mind for three popular activities.

Biking

- ▶ Make sure everyone wears a helmet and understands the rules of the road.
- ▶ Keep to the right and always ride single file, with an adult at the front and back.
- ▶ Ride in family-friendly, low-traffic areas whenever possible.

Hiking

- ▶ Give everyone, including the kids, a water bottle to carry, and see to it that they are drinking enough.
- ▶ Dress children in brightly colored clothing to help you spot them.
- ▶ Give each child a whistle to use if he or she becomes separated from you.

Swimming

- ▶ Wear sunscreen with SPF 30 or higher and reapply frequently.
- ▶ Invest in proper-fitting, Coast Guard-approved flotation devices.
- ▶ Never leave children unattended in or around the water, regardless of their swimming ability.

HEAT AWARENESS

Being active in higher temperatures can lead to heat cramps, heat exhaustion and heatstroke. Find out what to watch for in your children. Visit BaylorHealth.com/HeatSafetyKids or swchildrens.org/heat today.



90–99%

As you gather backpacks and binders for the new school year, make sure your children also meet the state's vaccination requirements. **Most childhood vaccines are 90 to 99 percent effective in preventing disease**, according to the American Academy of Pediatrics. Call your doctor's office to schedule an appointment.

Build a Basic First-Aid Kit

Being prepared to handle an emergency starts with having a well-stocked first-aid kit handy at all times. Keep one in your home and in your car, and take one with you when you travel.

A basic first-aid kit should include:

- ▶ Two pairs of sterile gloves
- ▶ Sterile dressings
- ▶ Cleansing agent/soap and antibiotic towelettes
- ▶ Antibiotic and burn ointments
- ▶ Adhesive bandages in a variety of sizes
- ▶ Eye-wash solution to flush the eyes (or as a general decontaminant)
- ▶ Thermometer
- ▶ Prescription medications (insulin, heart medicine, asthma inhalers)
- ▶ Prescribed medical supplies (glucose and blood pressure monitoring equipment)
- ▶ Nonprescription medications (pain relievers, antidiarrheals, antacids, laxatives)
- ▶ Scissors and tweezers
- ▶ Petroleum jelly or other lubricant



Don't forget to regularly check expiration dates on products and medications and replace as needed.

Source: ready.gov

MORE

Prepare for an Emergency

When you need care quickly, there is no time to research your options. So develop your plan now! To learn about emergency services in your area, visit BaylorHealth.com/Emergency (North Texas) or er.sw.org (Central Texas).



Diabetes To-Do List

A doctor's advice for managing the disease

➔ **EVERY YEAR**, more than 1.5 million people are diagnosed with type 2 diabetes. Most are prescribed medication, usually oral tablets or insulin or both, to regulate their blood sugar.

About 14 percent of people with diabetes, however, are able to manage the disease without medication. Can you be one of them?

“Lifestyle changes are by far one of the most important things you can do to control your diabetes,” says Jamie Olejarski, MD, an endocrinologist on the medical staff at Baylor Scott & White Medical Center – Hillcrest.

Here is what Dr. Olejarski advises to reduce the reliance on diabetes medication—or to eliminate the need altogether—and to improve overall well-being:

EXERCISE

Strive for 150 minutes of moderately intense aerobic exercise per week: walking, bicycling, swimming, dancing, yard work. “Exercise is an important factor in controlling diabetes. Your muscles use sugar as an energy source during exercise, thereby lowering your blood glucose values,” Dr. Olejarski says.

Additionally, she says to add two sessions a week of weight training and resistance training, because strong muscles raise your metabolism in

the long run and help with glycemia (blood sugar) and weight.

EAT HEALTHFULLY

Follow a portion-controlled diet that is rich in natural foods and low in processed foods, which tend to be high in sugar. Also, watch your intake of carbohydrates. Aim for 45 grams of carbs per meal and 15 grams per snack. To figure out carbohydrate totals for natural foods that don't come with labels, Dr. Olejarski suggests downloading a carbohydrate counter or a diabetes-focused mobile app.

BE MINDFUL OF BEVERAGES

When it comes to drinks, water and other low- or no-sugar options like unsweetened tea and coffee are best. Moderate alcohol consumption is OK, but try to enjoy it with food to prevent hypoglycemia (low blood sugar). Also, Dr. Olejarski recommends avoiding or limiting artificially sweetened drinks, as there is still some question about their effect on blood sugar.

KEEP STRESS IN CHECK

“Stress plays a significant role in diabetes and can directly affect blood glucose levels,” Dr. Olejarski says. “Finding healthy ways to reduce or cope with stress is important.” Try a yoga or meditation class, or burn off your burdens with aerobic exercise.

MORE

In Check and Under Control

An endocrinologist on the medical staff at Baylor Scott & White – Irving can help you put together a plan for healthy living. For a referral, visit [BaylorHealth.com/Irving](https://www.baylorhealth.com/irving) or call **1.800.4BAYLOR**.

SLEEP WELL

Get at least seven to nine hours of sleep a night. “Allowing your body to follow the natural circadian rhythm has been shown to improve glucose control and help manage diabetes,” Dr. Olejarski says.

MANAGE WEIGHT

Reducing your body weight by 5 to 10 percent can minimize your reliance on diabetes medications by lowering your blood glucose levels; enhance your quality of life by boosting your energy and fitness levels; and lessen your risk for diabetes-related complications like heart disease and stroke by lowering your blood pressure and bad cholesterol levels.



Color Code

What your urine can tell you about your health



IF YOU WANT TO KNOW

whether you're drinking enough water for good health, check your urine. (Pale yellow is the goal.) Besides your state of hydration, what else can the color of your urine show you?

RED

Red urine usually means the presence of blood. "You need an evaluation to rule out kidney, bladder or prostate cancer," says Gregory Thoreson, MD, a urologist on the medical staff at Baylor University Medical Center at Dallas. "Sometimes red urine is the first and only sign you'll see of a genitourinary cancer, and the sooner you can address it, the more likely a cure is possible." Dr. Thoreson adds that red urine can also warn of a urinary tract infection or kidney stones.

BROWN

Brown urine can signify old blood making its way out, or it can also be a result of dehydration. If you're experiencing nausea and fatigue along with dark-brown urine, you might have a liver disorder such as hepatitis or cirrhosis. Seek medical attention to determine the cause.

ORANGE

The only reason your urine would be in this range, Dr. Thoreson says, is if you've recently taken the medications

phenazopyridine (to relieve urinary pain) or possibly rifampin (to treat tuberculosis) or warfarin (to prevent blood clots).

YELLOW

Any hue from pale straw to dark yellow will do, although the darker end of the spectrum is your cue to quench your thirst. Dr. Thoreson underscores the importance of adequate water intake. Dehydration, he says, is the leading factor for kidney stone formation, which is more prevalent in Southern states because of the heat.

BLUE OR GREEN

Yes, you can have this color urine! Don't worry, though. It doesn't mean you're an alien. It simply means you've recently taken a type of urinary pain reliever or antiseptic called methylene blue.

CLOUDY

Milky or cloudy urine could indicate inflammation and infection in the urinary system. See your doctor for a diagnosis and treatment.

FIND DR. RIGHT®

A primary care physician on the medical staff at Baylor Scott & White – Irving can help you make sense of your symptoms. For a referral, visit [BaylorHealth.com/Irving](https://www.baylorhealth.com/irving) or call **1.800.4BAYLOR**.



Changing The Change

**Menopause affects some women more than others.
In any case, we have your reprieve**

➔ WOMEN ARE MUCH MORE OPEN ABOUT MENOPAUSE today than a generation or two ago, but that doesn't mean they know exactly what to expect or how to ease their way through the transition.

That was certainly the case for Mia Emery, who was caught off guard by the arrival of menopause. She had been taking birth control continuously—a method that prevents menstrual bleeding entirely—since 2002. She stopped in 2014, and menopause symptoms hit her just two weeks later.

Emery had severe hot flashes along with discomfort that made her fingers, wrists, toes, ankles and hips feel weak, achy and hot.

“Almost every aspect of my daily activity was altered,” says Emery, a librarian who lives in Belton, just southwest of Temple. “It was painful to even take a dish out of the oven. I didn't think I would ever be the same again.”

Emery reached out to her Ob-Gyn, who put her on low-dose hormone therapy. The hot flashes stopped right away, and the joint aches eased after a while.

“I feel great,” says Emery, who enjoys scuba diving, hiking and camping. “Life is back to normal, with the exception of occasional, minor joint aches.”

“My doctor put me on low-dose estrogen that she believed would really help. It did—instantly!”

—Mia Emery



Mia Emery and her daughters, Kathryn (left) and Rachel

TROUBLESOME SYMPTOMS

Menopause usually arrives between ages 45 and 55, after a woman has gone a full year without a menstrual period. Most women notice at least some changes when their bodies start producing less of the hormones estrogen and progesterone.

“It’s a critical time in a woman’s life, because our hormones—particularly estrogen—have effects throughout our body,” says Patricia Sulak, MD, an Ob-Gyn at Scott & White Clinic – Temple. “There are estrogen receptors not just in our vagina and uterus, but also in our brain, our blood vessels and our joints.”

Symptoms frequently begin before periods stop, during what’s called perimenopause. Women may experience sporadic or heavy menstrual periods,

and they may also have hot flashes, night sweats and joint aches, as Emery did. Other symptoms include sleep disturbances, mood swings and irritability, as well as bone density decline and vaginal dryness or thinning.

These adverse effects are caused by fluctuations in hormones.

MANY OPTIONS FOR RELIEF

Women today, thankfully, have many choices for addressing menopausal symptoms.

“The best treatment for hot flashes and night sweats is low-dose hormone therapy,” Dr. Sulak says, adding that the therapy is also approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration for the prevention of bone loss (osteoporosis), another consequence of the body’s decreasing hormones.

Other options include low-dose birth control pills, an implanted birth control device (IUD) containing progesterone, an estrogen patch and an estrogen vaginal ring.

Women who can’t take hormones—because they’ve had breast cancer or have a history of blood clots, for example—have treatment options, too. Some antidepressants in low doses can help with hot flashes, Dr. Sulak says.

Most of the time, medical management is successful, but surgical procedures such as hysterectomy or endometrial ablation—removal of the lining of the uterus to minimize or stop menstrual bleeding—can be part of the treatment plan.

“If a woman is having difficulties going through this stage,” Dr. Sulak says, “it’s important that she see a health care provider who is up to date on all of the therapies and who can help her navigate this crucial time.”

RELIEF FOR SEVERE SYMPTOMS

Some of the more common symptoms that women experience during menopause are hot flashes, mood swings and vaginal dryness, which can make intercourse painful. You should talk to your doctor if any of these, though considered mild, are interfering with your daily life. More concerning symptoms, such as uncontrollable headaches and depression, require prompt medical evaluation.


Miranda Wellington, MD, a family medicine physician on the medical staff at Baylor Scott & White Medical Center – Irving, says, “The mainstay treatment for menopause is systemic hormonal replacement therapy.” Estrogen, alone or in combination with progesterone, can be administered through pills, transdermal patch, gel, cream or spray. Dr. Wellington says supplements such as black cohosh and flaxseed have also been shown to help with milder symptoms.

Even if you’re sailing through menopause, talk to your doctor, as you might be at higher risk for osteoporosis and heart disease.

MORE

Get the Help You Need

For a referral to a primary care physician or an Ob-Gyn who can help you get your menopause symptoms under control, visit [BaylorHealth.com/irving](https://www.baylorhealth.com/irving) or call **1.800.4BAYLOR**.



Assess your stress and find ways to relax.

Young Hearts

Considerations of cardiovascular disease at an early age

➔ MOST OF US DON'T EXPECT TO HAVE HEART DISEASE. For people in their 30s and 40s, it's probably not even on the radar.

But here you are. Your doctor diagnosed heart failure or arrhythmia (irregular heartbeat), or you had a heart attack.

You know firsthand that cardiovascular disease affects younger folks, too. And because you're probably in the prime of your career and raising a family, you might have questions about how the diagnosis affects you differently than if you were older.

Start with these answers.

IS THIS NORMAL?

Heart disease at an early age is becoming increasingly common. One form of the disease, heart attacks, mostly occurs in men older than 45 and women older than 55, but as many as one in 10 attacks happens before age 45. That means heart disease markers such as high cholesterol and high blood pressure (hypertension) are likely present well before middle age. In fact, a study published in the journal *Circulation* found that many men ages 30 to 34 already have advanced plaque buildup in their coronary arteries.

HOW WILL HEART DISEASE AFFECT MY CAREER?

The condition is manageable, but it might call for concessions at work to accommodate doctor appointments and screenings. Most people with desk jobs can continue with their regular responsibilities. Those with more physically demanding work may need to avoid strenuous activity that can lead to angina, or chest pain.

“Some people with heart disease have physical limitations due to their symptoms,” says Ari Cedars, MD, medical director of the Center for Adult Congenital Heart Disease at Baylor University Medical Center at Dallas. “They may not be able to exert themselves as vigorously as someone of the same age who doesn’t have heart disease.”

SHOULD I BE CONCERNED ABOUT A HEART ATTACK (OR ANOTHER ONE)?

Having heart disease puts you at increased risk for a heart attack, so you’ll want to be watchful.



Chest pain remains the most common heart attack symptom, though it’s not always as dramatic as the chest-clutching scenes you see in movies. It might feel more like a tightness or a fullness than a crushing sensation. Also, women are less likely than men to experience chest pain during a heart attack, and some women have no chest pain at all.

Other symptoms include pain or discomfort in the back, neck, jaw, stomach or one or both arms; shortness of breath; breaking out in a cold sweat; nausea; and lightheadedness.

WHAT CAN I DO ABOUT MY CONDITION?

Plenty! First, know your numbers. “Have a fasting cholesterol test and get your blood pressure and glucose levels checked,” Dr. Cedars says. You and your doctor will use this information to monitor your heart health and adjust your care as needed.

Next, take a good look at your diet. If you’re not sure where to start, ask your doctor about meeting with a registered dietitian, who can help you put together a heart-healthy yet realistic eating plan. And get moving. It can be difficult to dedicate time to working out because of career demands and a hectic home life, but you owe it to yourself to make exercise a priority.

Last, assess the amount of stress you have in your life and find ways to relax: meditate, practice yoga, listen to soothing music. Your heart—and your body—will thank you for it.

HEART-HEALTHY SWAPS

If you’re looking to help your heart, watch what you’re putting on your plate. Start with a few small changes that can move your diet in the right direction. Padma Uppalapati, MD, a cardiologist on the medical staff at Baylor Scott & White Medical Center – Irving, suggests these substitutions:

Instead of: Steak with potatoes.

Try: Baked chicken with a large green salad.

Why: You’ll save a lot of calories—and saturated fat—without sacrificing nutrients. Just be smart about the dressing.

Instead of: White pasta with meat sauce and garlic bread.

Try: Whole-wheat pasta with tomatoes, onions, peppers and marinara sauce.

Why: The complex carbohydrates in whole-wheat pasta are healthier, and the veggies are chock-full of vitamins.

Instead of: Potato chips.

Try: An apple with a wedge of low-fat cheese.

Why: The fruit will fill you up, and the protein in the cheese will keep you feeling full, not reaching for another snack before long.

Instead of: Soda.

Try: Water flavored with lemon or fruit.

Why: You’ll avoid the spikes in blood sugar (that can lead to diabetes) found in soda and carbonated beverages—even diet soda.

MORE

Nutrition Advice Tailored to You

Talk to a cardiologist on the medical staff at Baylor Scott & White – Irving for more tips on building a heart-healthy diet. For a referral, visit [BaylorHealth.com/Irving](https://www.baylorhealth.com/irving) or call **1.800.4BAYLOR**.



Back So Soon?

Trauma patients frequently return to the hospital for unplanned care, and researchers are trying to determine why

➔ It's no secret that the rising cost of health care is burdensome. Or that reversing this troubling trend is tricky. But something needs to be done.

Laura Bruce Petrey, MD, a trauma surgeon on the medical staff at Baylor University Medical Center at Dallas, and her research team are focused on one aspect of the problem: trauma readmissions.

unanticipated care within a year of their initial visit.

Addressing this dilemma would benefit both patients and hospitals, Dr. Petrey says.

"If you come into the hospital as an inpatient [as opposed to a clinic as an outpatient], your bill is going to be much higher," she says. Plus, if a person goes to a hospital, it's likely that there is a significant concern. "We want to be able to treat patients before a health problem becomes more serious or even life-threatening," Dr. Petrey adds.

For hospitals, they can avoid financial penalties for what the government deems "excess readmissions" by reducing how many patients come back after trauma care.

instance, septicemia is more common among people with diabetes who don't manage their blood sugar levels.

She wonders, then, whether better educating patients about their injuries, helping them understand their discharge instructions and arranging follow-up appointments could be among the solutions. Continued education of people with diabetes and heart failure about their diseases and improved access to care and medications might have an effect, as well.

The researchers have already completed a follow-up study, and they are hopeful their efforts can help lead to real changes. It's a complicated issue—and one Dr. Petrey and her team are committed to—because, as she says, "this is just the tip of the iceberg."

WHY IT MATTERS

When people go to the hospital after a trauma, such as a car accident, the expectation is they can head home afterward and heal, following up as needed with a primary care physician. But a lot of trauma patients—21 percent of them, according to research published last year by Dr. Petrey's team—end up returning to the hospital for

ABOUT THE STUDY

Understanding Trauma Patient Readmissions

A team of researchers is exploring why people return to the hospital within a year of their trauma, in an effort to reduce readmissions and, ultimately, health care costs.

Key Contributors

Baylor University Medical Center at Dallas
Dallas-Fort Worth Hospital Council

WHAT THE RESEARCH REVEALS

Using regional data from the Dallas-Fort Worth Hospital Council, the researchers discovered that diabetes and congestive heart failure were prevailing predictors of patients returning to the hospital. Septicemia (infection) also was a leading reason for readmission.

Those factors could go hand in hand, Dr. Petrey points out. For

MORE

Exploring New and Better Ways

Want to see more of the discoveries happening at Baylor Scott & White? Visit [BaylorHealth.com/AdvancingMedicine](https://www.baylorhealth.com/advancingmedicine) and [research.sw.org](https://www.research.sw.org) today.

WHAT'S ONLINE

→ [BaylorHealth.com](https://www.baylorhealth.com)



TIPSHEET

SKIN DEEP

Are you doing everything you can to protect your body's largest organ? Start with these skin cancer prevention tips.



→ Go to [BaylorHealth.com/Tipsheet](https://www.baylorhealth.com/Tipsheet) to download our guide.



RECIPE

PINEAPPLE GRILLED CHICKEN WITH PINEAPPLE SALSA

Fire up the barbecue for this pairing of smoky grilled chicken and sweet-and-spicy salsa. Low in fat and high in protein, vitamin C and iron, it's sure to be a hit for family night or a block party.

→ Find this recipe at [BaylorHealth.com/Recipe](https://www.baylorhealth.com/Recipe)—and let us know how it goes over!



ONLINE

Take a Virtual Tour of Our Emergency Department

The expanded Emergency Department at Baylor Scott & White - Irving includes 55 patient beds, new guest lounges, a spacious reception area, a dedicated laboratory, a pharmacy, an innovative CT scanner, and telemedicine technology for people with stroke symptoms.

→ Visit [BaylorHealth.com/IrvingER](https://www.baylorhealth.com/IrvingER) to watch the video.

RESOURCE

AVOIDING THE LAZY DAZE OF SUMMER

Getting the kids to turn off their devices and get active is easier than you think. Try these five ways to get the young ones back into summer fun.

→ Go to [BaylorHealth.com/ExclusiveArticles](https://www.baylorhealth.com/ExclusiveArticles) to read more.

VIDEO

'I CAN DO WHATEVER I WANT TO DO NOW.'

When Ed Kennedy found out he needed hip replacement surgery, he didn't hesitate to come to Baylor.

→ Head to [BaylorHealth.com/MyStory](https://www.baylorhealth.com/MyStory) to watch Ed's story.



From cholesterol to cardiac rehab



and everything in between.

When you're faced with a heart health concern, you want one place to care for all of your needs. At Baylor Scott & White Medical Center – Irving, you'll find local care that's backed by the expertise of the largest not-for-profit health care system in Texas. So no matter what you need, from a routine cholesterol check to a personalized cardiac rehab program, Baylor Scott & White – Irving will be ready for you.



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To find a heart and vascular specialist on the medical staff, call
1.800.4BAYLOR or check your heart risk online at **HeartDiseaseQuiz.com**.